

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-36 (canceled).

Claim 37 (new): An at-home medical consultation system comprising:
a reception server including a function for accepting a request for medical consultation from a patient terminal having a videophone function used by a patient at home, and a function for connecting the patient terminal whose request for medical consultation has been accepted to a doctor terminal having a videophone function; and
a communication server including a function for providing a bidirectional communication service of video and audio between the connected patient terminal and the doctor terminal; wherein

the communication server includes a function for setting a virtual nursing room to which is connected the patient terminal used by a person who must be monitored for a deterioration in a condition of the person such that the condition can be confirmed from a nurse terminal or a doctor terminal having a videophone function;

the reception server includes a function for connecting the patient terminal to the virtual nursing room that has been set upon a request from the patient terminal used by the person who must be monitored, and a function for connecting a requesting terminal to the virtual nursing room that has been set upon a request from a nurse terminal or a doctor terminal having the videophone function;

the communication server includes a function for receiving at least video transmitted from the patient terminal connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set and synthesizing the video so as to be displayed side by side at the requesting terminal, and a function for transmitting the synthesized video to the requesting terminal;

the reception server includes a function for selecting a patient terminal connected to the virtual nursing room that is set based on a location on a screen specified by a

pointing device at the requesting terminal, and a function for separately connecting the selected patient terminal to the requesting terminal; and

the communication server includes a function for providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the requesting terminal that have been connected.

Claim 38 (new): An at-home medical consultation system comprising:

a reception server, including a function for accepting a request for medical consultation from a patient terminal having a videophone function used by a patient at home, and a function for connecting the patient terminal whose request for medical consultation has been accepted to a doctor terminal having a videophone function; and

a communication server including a function for providing a bidirectional communication service of video and audio between the connected patient terminal and the doctor terminal; wherein

the communication server includes a function for setting a virtual nursing room to which is connected the patient terminal used by a person who must be monitored for a deterioration in a condition of the person such that the condition can be confirmed from a nurse terminal or a doctor terminal having a videophone function;

the reception server includes a function for connecting the patient terminal to the virtual nursing room that has been set upon a request from the patient terminal used by the person who must be monitored, and a function for connecting a requesting terminal to the virtual nursing room that has been set upon a request from a nurse terminal or a doctor terminal having the videophone function;

the communication server includes a function for receiving at least video transmitted from the patient terminals connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set and transmitting at least the video to the requesting terminal;

the requesting terminal includes a function for receiving at least the video transmitted from the patient terminals connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set and displaying them side by side;

the requesting terminal includes a function for selecting a patient terminal connected to the virtual nursing room based on a location on a screen specified by a pointing device;

the reception server includes a function for separately connecting the selected patient terminal to the requesting terminal; and

the communication server includes a function for providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the requesting terminal that have been connected.

Claim 39 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 37, wherein:

the patient terminal includes a medical examination sensor arranged to collect data necessary for consulting the patient and includes a function for obtaining the data of the medical examination sensor and transmitting the data to the communication server; and

the communication server includes a function for receiving the data of the medical examination sensor transmitted from the patient terminals connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set and synthesizing the data so as to be displayed corresponding to each video of the patient terminals.

Claim 40 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 38, wherein:

the patient terminal includes a medical examination sensor for collecting data necessary for consulting the patient and includes a function for obtaining the data of the medical examination sensor and transmitting the data to the communication server;

the communication server includes a function for receiving the data of the medical examination sensor transmitted from the patient terminals connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set and transmitting the data to the requesting terminal; and

the requesting terminal includes a function for receiving the transmitted data of the medical examination sensor and displaying the data corresponding to each video of the patient terminals.

Claim 41 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 37, wherein:

the reception server includes a function for accepting a request for interrupting the transmission from the patient terminal connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set; and

the communication server includes a function for interrupting the transmission of video and audio of the patient terminal whose request for interrupting the transmission has been accepted.

Claim 42 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 38, wherein:

the reception server includes a function for accepting a request for interrupting the transmission from the patient terminal connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set; and

the communication server includes a function for interrupting the transmission of video and audio of the patient terminal whose request for interrupting the transmission has been accepted.

Claim 43 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 37, wherein:

the reception server includes a function for accepting a request for general broadcast from the requesting terminal; and

the communication server includes a function for receiving at least audio transmitted from the requesting terminal whose request for general broadcast has been accepted, and generally broadcasting the audio to the patient terminals connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set.

Claim 44 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 38, wherein:

the reception server includes a function for accepting a request for general broadcast from the requesting terminal; and

the communication server includes a function for receiving at least audio transmitted from the requesting terminal whose request for general broadcast has been accepted, and generally broadcasting the audio to the patient terminals connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set.

Claim 45 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 37, wherein:

the communication server includes a function for setting a virtual waiting room to which the patient terminals whose request for medical consultation has been accepted are connected through a multi-point connection;

the reception server includes a function for connecting the patient terminal whose request for medical consultation has been accepted to the virtual waiting room that has been set;

the communication server includes a function for providing a bidirectional communication service among the connected patient terminals through the multi-point connection;

the reception server includes a function for selecting a callee patient terminal connected to the virtual waiting room that has been set based on a location on a screen specified by a pointing device at the caller patient terminal connected to the virtual waiting room that has been set, and a function for separately connecting the selected callee patient terminal to the caller patient terminal; and

the communication server includes a function for providing a communication service by video and audio between the callee patient terminal and the caller patient terminal that have been connected.

Claim 46 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 38, wherein:

the communication server includes a function for setting a virtual waiting room to which the patient terminals whose request for medical consultation has been accepted are connected through a multi-point connection;

the reception server includes a function for connecting the patient terminal whose request for medical consultation has been accepted to the virtual waiting room that has been set;

the communication server includes a function for providing a bidirectional communication service among the connected patient terminals through the multi-point connection;

the reception server includes a function for selecting a callee patient terminal connected to the virtual waiting room that has been set based on a location on a screen specified by a pointing device at the caller patient terminal connected to the virtual waiting room that has been set, and a function for separately connecting the selected callee patient terminal to the caller patient terminal separately; and

the communication server includes a function for providing a communication service by video and audio between the callee patient terminal and the caller patient terminal that have been connected.

Claim 47 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 45, wherein the reception server includes a function for connecting the waiting room terminal having a videophone function provided in a waiting room of a hospital to the virtual waiting room that has been set.

Claim 48 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 46, wherein the reception server includes a function for connecting the waiting room terminal having a videophone function provided in a waiting room of a hospital to the virtual waiting room that has been set.

Claim 49 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 37, wherein:

the reception server includes a function for displaying a list of patients whose requests for medical consultation have been accepted to a nurse terminal having a videophone function, and a function for separately connecting a patient terminal used by a patient selected from the list of patients displayed at the nurse terminal to the nurse terminal; and

the communication server includes a function for providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the nurse terminal that have been connected.

Claim 50 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 38, wherein:

the reception server includes a function for displaying a list of patients whose requests for medical consultation have been accepted to a nurse terminal having a videophone function, and a function for separately connecting a patient terminal used by a patient selected from the list of patients displayed at the nurse terminal to the nurse terminal; and

the communication server includes a function for providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the nurse terminal that have been connected.

Claim 51 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 37, wherein:

the reception server includes a function for accepting a nurse call from the patient terminal, a function for notifying the accepted nurse call to a nurse terminal having the videophone function, and a function for automatically connecting the patient terminal whose nurse call has been accepted to the nurse terminal to which the nurse call has been notified; and

the communication server includes a function for providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the nurse terminal that have been connected.

Claim 52 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 38, wherein:

the reception server includes a function for accepting a nurse call from the patient terminal, a function for notifying the accepted nurse call to a nurse terminal having the videophone function, and a function for automatically connecting the patient terminal whose nurse call has been accepted to the nurse terminal to which the nurse call has been notified; and

the communication server includes a function for providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the nurse terminal that have been connected.

Claim 53 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 51, wherein the patient terminal comprises a nurse call button for transmitting a nurse call to the reception server, and automatically logs into the reception server to transmit the nurse call when the nurse call button is pressed.

Claim 54 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 52, wherein the patient terminal comprises a nurse call button for transmitting a nurse call to the reception server, and automatically logs into the reception server to transmit the nurse call when the nurse call button is pressed.

Claim 55 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 51, wherein:

the reception server includes a function for receiving an emergency notice from the nurse terminal to which the nurse call has been notified, a function for notifying the received emergency notice to the doctor terminal used by a doctor in charge of the

patient whose nurse call has been accepted, and a function for automatically connecting the patient terminal whose nurse call has been accepted to the doctor terminal to which the emergency notice has been notified; and

the communication server includes a function for providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the doctor terminal that have been connected.

Claim 56 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 52, wherein:

the reception server includes a function for receiving an emergency notice from the nurse terminal to which the nurse call has been notified, a function for notifying the received emergency notice to the doctor terminal used by a doctor in charge of the patient whose nurse call has been accepted, and a function for automatically connecting the patient terminal whose nurse call has been accepted to the doctor terminal to which the emergency notice has been notified; and

the communication server includes a function for providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the doctor terminal that have been connected.

Claim 57 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 37, wherein the reception server includes a function for receiving a request for medication from the patient terminal, a function for requesting the doctor terminal used by the doctor in charge of the patient whose request for the medication has been accepted to confirm the medication, and a function for delivering a prescription issued by the doctor terminal in response to the request for confirming the medication to a pharmacy terminal used by a pharmacy that offers a home delivery service of medicine.

Claim 58 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 38, wherein the reception server includes a function for receiving a request for medication from the patient terminal, a function for requesting the doctor terminal used

by the doctor in charge of the patient whose request for the medication has been accepted to confirm the medication, and a function for delivering a prescription issued by the doctor terminal in response to the request for confirming the medication to a pharmacy terminal used by a pharmacy that offers a home delivery service of medicine.

Claim 59 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 37, wherein the reception server includes a function for accepting a request for counseling from the patient terminal, a function for receiving counseling from the patient terminal whose request for counseling has been accepted, a function for transmitting the received counseling to the doctor terminal used by the doctor in charge, a function for receiving replies from the doctor terminal in response to the transmitted counseling, and a function for transmitting the received replies to the patient terminal whose request for counseling has been accepted.

Claim 60 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 38, wherein the reception server includes a function for accepting a request for counseling from the patient terminal, a function for receiving counseling from the patient terminal whose request for counseling has been accepted, a function for transmitting the received counseling to the doctor terminal used by the doctor in charge, a function for receiving replies from the doctor terminal in response to the transmitted counseling, and a function for transmitting the received replies to the patient terminal whose request for counseling has been accepted.

Claim 61 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 37, wherein the reception server includes a function for accepting a reservation for visit consultation from the patient terminal.

Claim 62 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 38, wherein the reception server includes a function for accepting a reservation for visit consultation from the patient terminal.

Claim 63 (new): An at-home medical consultation method comprising:
a reception step which includes a step of accepting a request for medical consultation from a patient terminal having a videophone function used by a patient at home, and a step of connecting the patient terminal whose request for medical consultation has been accepted to a doctor terminal having a videophone function; and
a communication step which includes a step of providing a bidirectional communication service of video and audio between the connected patient terminal and the doctor terminal; wherein

the communication step includes a step of setting a virtual nursing room to which is connected the patient terminal used by a person who must be monitored for deterioration of a condition, such that the condition can be confirmed from a nurse terminal or a doctor terminal having a videophone function;

the reception step includes a step of connecting the patient terminal to the virtual nursing room that has been set upon a request from the patient terminal used by the person who must be monitored, and a step of connecting a requesting terminal to the virtual nursing room that has been set upon a request from a nurse terminal or a doctor terminal having the videophone function;

the communication step includes a step of receiving at least video transmitted from the patient terminals connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set and synthesizing the video so as to be displayed side by side at the requesting terminal, and a step of transmitting the synthesized videos to the requesting terminal;

the reception step includes a step of selecting a patient terminal connected to the virtual nursing room that is set based upon a position in a screen specified by a pointing device at the requesting terminal, and a step of separately connecting the selected patient terminal to the requesting terminal; and

the communication step includes a step of providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the requesting terminal that have been connected.

Claim 64 (new): An at-home medical consultation method comprising:
a reception step which includes a step of accepting a request for medical consultation from a patient terminal having a videophone function used by a patient at home, and a step of connecting the patient terminal whose request for medical consultation has been accepted to a doctor terminal having a videophone function; and
a communication step which includes a step of providing a bidirectional communication service of video and audio between the connected patient terminal and the doctor terminal; wherein

the communication step includes a step of setting a virtual nursing room to which is connected the patient terminal used by a person who must be monitored for a deterioration in a condition, such that the condition can be confirmed from a nurse terminal or a doctor terminal having a videophone function;

the reception step includes a step of connecting the patient terminal to the virtual nursing room that has been set upon a request from the patient terminal used by the person who must be monitored, and a step of connecting the requesting terminal to the virtual nursing room that has been set upon a request from a nurse terminal or a doctor terminal having the videophone function;

the communication step includes a step of receiving at least video transmitted from the patient terminals connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set and transmitting at least the video to the requesting terminal, and a step of receiving at least the video transmitted from the patient terminals connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set and displaying them side by side in the requesting terminal;

the reception step includes a step of selecting a patient terminal connected to the virtual nursing room based on a location in a screen specified by a pointing device in the requesting terminal and a step of separately connecting the selected patient terminal to the requesting terminal;

the communication step includes a step of providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the requesting terminal that have been connected.

Claim 65 (new): The at-home medical consultation method according to claim 63, wherein:

the communication step includes a step of receiving data of medical examination sensors transmitted from the patient terminals connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set and synthesizing the data so as to be displayed corresponding to each video of the patient terminals of the synthesized video.

Claim 66 (new): The at-home medical consultation method according to claim 64, wherein:

the communication step includes a step of receiving data of medical examination sensors transmitted from the patient terminals connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set and transmitting the data to the requesting terminal, a step of receiving the data of the medical examination sensors transmitted from the patient terminals connected to the virtual nursing room that has been set and displaying them corresponding to each video of the patient terminals in the requesting terminal.

Claim 67 (new): The at-home medical consultation method according to claim 63, wherein:

the communication step includes a step of setting a virtual waiting room to which the patient terminals whose request for consultation has been accepted are connected through a multi-point connection;

the reception step includes a step of connecting the patient terminal whose request for medical consultation has been accepted to the virtual waiting room that has been set;

the communication step includes a step of providing a bidirectional communication service among the patient terminals that have been connected through the multi-point connection;

the reception step includes a step of selecting a callee patient terminal connected to the virtual waiting room that has been set based on a location on a screen specified by a pointing device at the caller patient terminal connected to the virtual waiting room

that has been set, and a step of separately connecting the selected callee patient terminal to the caller patient terminal; and

the communication step includes a step of providing a communication service by video and audio between the connected callee patient terminal and the caller patient terminal.

Claim 68 (new): The at-home medical consultation method according to claim 64, wherein:

the communication step includes a step of setting a virtual waiting room to which the patient terminals whose request for consultation has been accepted are connected through a multi-point connection;

the reception step includes a step of connecting the patient terminal whose request for medical consultation has been accepted to the virtual waiting room that has been set;

the communication step includes a step of providing a bidirectional communication service among the patient terminals that have been connected through the multi-point connection;

the reception step includes a step of selecting a callee patient terminal connected to the virtual waiting room that has been set based on a location on a screen specified by a pointing device at the caller patient terminal connected to the virtual waiting room that has been set, and a step of separately connecting the selected callee patient terminal to the caller patient terminal; and

the communication step includes a step of providing a communication service by video and audio between the connected callee patient terminal and the caller patient terminal.

Claim 69 (new): The at-home medical consultation method according to claim 63, wherein:

the reception step includes a step of displaying a list of patients whose requests for medical consultation have been accepted to a nurse terminal having a videophone

function, and a step of separately connecting a patient terminal used by a patient selected from the list of patients displayed at the nurse terminal to the nurse terminal; and

the communication step includes a step of providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the nurse terminal that have been connected.

Claim 70 (new): The at-home medical consultation method according to claim 64, wherein:

the reception step includes a step of displaying a list of patients whose requests for medical consultation have been accepted to a nurse terminal having a videophone function, and a step of separately connecting a patient terminal used by a patient selected from the list of patients displayed at the nurse terminal to the nurse terminal; and

the communication step includes a step of providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the nurse terminal that have been connected.

Claim 71 (new): The at-home medical consultation method according to claim 63, wherein:

the reception step includes a step of accepting a nurse call from the patient terminal, a step of notifying the accepted nurse call to a nurse terminal, and a step of connecting the patient terminal whose nurse call has been accepted to the nurse terminal to which the nurse call has been notified automatically; and

the communication step includes a step of providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the nurse terminal that have been connected.

Claim 72 (new): The at-home medical consultation method according to claim 64, wherein:

the reception step includes a step of accepting a nurse call from the patient terminal, a step of notifying the accepted nurse call to a nurse terminal, and a step of connecting the patient terminal whose nurse call has been accepted to the nurse terminal to which the nurse call has been notified automatically; and

the communication step includes a step of providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the nurse terminal that have been connected.

Claim 73 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 71, wherein:

the reception step includes a step of receiving an emergency notice from the nurse terminal to which the nurse call has been notified, a step of notifying the received emergency notice to the doctor terminal used by a doctor in charge of the patient whose nurse call has been received, and a step of automatically connecting the patient terminal whose nurse call has been accepted to the doctor terminal to which the emergency notice has been notified; and

the communication step includes a step of providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the doctor terminal that have been connected.

Claim 74 (new): The at-home medical consultation system according to claim 72, wherein:

the reception step includes a step of receiving an emergency notice from the nurse terminal to which the nurse call has been notified, a step of notifying the received emergency notice to the doctor terminal used by a doctor in charge of the patient whose nurse call has been received, and a step of automatically connecting the patient terminal whose nurse call has been accepted to the doctor terminal to which the emergency notice has been notified; and

the communication step includes a step of providing a bidirectional communication service by video and audio between the patient terminal and the doctor terminal that have been connected.

Claim 75 (new): An at-home medical consultation program for executing, by using a computer, the at-home medical consultation method described in claim 63.

Claim 76 (new): An at-home medical consultation program for executing, by using a computer, the at-home medical consultation method described in claim 64.